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which has given to the rules of financial management the definiteness, uniformity and certainty, indispensable to both private and public business.

In this work, as in so many treatises dealing with corporation law, the tendency of judicial legislation to play a more and more important part in our legal system is made strikingly apparent. In many respects this tendency has contributed to uniformity of legal standards throughout the country. No one would dispute the fact that with all the variations in interpretation, the standards of the courts have been more uniform, continuous and permanent than those of the state legislatures. While this uniformity has done much to meet the most important demands of the commercial world—especially as regards the law of corporate bonds, both public and private—it has tended to retard the movement toward uniformity of legislation. One of the important questions which political science must face is the justification for such judicial legislation. Would not real progress be better subserved if the legislature were to consciously face this problem rather than leave it to the courts to fill *lacunæ* and remedy shortcomings?

L. S. ROWE.

University of Pennsylvania.

The Growth of British Policy. An Historical Essay. By Sir J. R. SEELEY, Litt. D. Two vols. Pp. xxii, 436; and 403. Price, \$3.50. Cambridge: University Press, 1895.

This posthumous book, by Professor Seeley, is very properly described as an essay, and not a work of historical investigation. The author makes no effort to extend the bounds of historical knowledge, nor to obtain greater accuracy or fullness for our information about the facts of the period he discusses. Contenting himself with what may be described as the commonplace body of accepted knowledge of the history of Western Europe, from the middle of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth, his whole task is to interpret this history in such a way as to explain the international position which England had attained at the time of the accession of Queen Anne. He believes that there has been practically no divergence from this position and policy since that time, so that the work becomes an historical explanation of the modern position in Europe of the state of Great Britain and Ireland. The connecting thread for the century and a half covered by his essay, is found in the contemporaneous character of three great movements. It is the period of the greatness of the Spanish Hapsburgs; it is the period of the special

influence of the Dutch on the fortunes of Europe; it is the period of the counter-reformation. Notwithstanding its title and subject, then, the book does not find its essential unity in English history. The growth of English policy is rather the result of the reaction of these influences on the internal condition of England and its two connected kingdoms. Its history during the same period was, indeed, a series of alternations between an active, self-directed, and a passive, subordinating foreign policy, until it settled down into its final equilibrium.

To view history "in the large," to treat whole nations as units, and peoples as embodied in their governments; then to study these nations in their relations to one another, rather than in their internal development; to explain why a certain international policy was followed; and what were the results of the adoption of such a policy is the ideal of the book. Such an ideal is not a popular one among historical writers in our time; it seems to us rather like threshing over old straw. We feel that there are so many problems of internal institutions and changes remaining unsolved, that it is futile and purposeless to deal with communities as wholes when we do not understand them as complements.

But accepting this view of history, Professor Seeley has written a suggestive and a brilliant book. Some of his main conceptions are as follows: The most essential factor in modern British policy is the union of England and Scotland, and the subordinate inclusion of Ireland in the same group. "We cannot but see how instantaneously in the year 1559, the outline of modern Great Britain springs to light. Hitherto England and Scotland had confronted each other like two barbaric tribes at eternal blood-feud, and the inclinations of Scotland had been toward France. But from this time forward, they stand together on the basis, which in political union, is almost alone solid, of religion, and they are both alike opposed to France." "By abstaining from all foreign connexions and by strengthening the connexion with Scotland, Elizabeth made our state for the first time truly insular. She gave us that frontier which has hitherto proved impassable. She thus raised us to a position of self-sufficing security which few other states enjoy, so that since her time Englishmen have seldom felt their country to be really in danger."

Thus a second influence, almost as significant in its bearings on future history, was the character of the reign of Elizabeth. Not only by drawing closer to the reformed party in Scotland, but in her general policy her reign raised England into a security she had never known before, and has never lost since. And this she accomplished mainly not through her international action, but through international inaction; not through war, but through the avoidance of war. "The

maxim of her reign was to settle nothing, but to gain time." She treated in this way the question of the status and the claim of succession of Mary, Queen of Scots. For nineteen years Mary remained in durance in England, subjected continually to the seeming vacillation and indecision of Elizabeth. It was the same with the marriage question; no one of the many political courtships of the reign was actually decided adversely. They ran on till the current set some other way, and made the marriage impossible, or till the candidate died. The succession was not settled till the queen was on her death-bed. So it was in her relations with the Huguenots, with the Netherlanders. Not till 1585 did any foreign war begin, and even then it was doubtful almost till the Armada became visible from Plymouth, whether there would be actual fighting. This masterly inactivity, this avoidance of decision, whether it resulted mainly from the queen's natural proclivities or from studied policy, was of untold value to England. "Among all great rulers it is the distinction of Elizabeth to have shown how much may be achieved by simply allowing full play to the influence of time." Thus the English people were allowed time to decide whether they should be Catholic or Protestant. They lived in profound peace in the days of Alva in the Netherlands, the Guises in France, Darnley and Bothwell in Scotland. They grew rich; they began to reach out to a western world where their later empire was largely to lie. They began to explore, to trade, to colonize. They developed a national self-confidence, activity, and unity, which put them in the van of the future in many respects.

So with other leading influences, the unifying force of the counter-reformation, and the resulting power of its armed champion, Philip II., the transformation of France under the guidance of Richelieu, between 1630 and 1636, the military monarchy of Cromwell, the opposition between the national and the dynastic tendencies of the two later Stuarts, the effect of the Revolution of 1688 in introducing a period of constant war with France, the entrance of commercial questions as the ruling influence at the close of the sixteenth century.

In the discussion and proof of these theses there is abundance of brilliant reasoning and vivid characterization. New ideas and epigrammatic statements meet one on almost every page. Yet this method of writing history has its dangers. Historical events are sometimes made to fit a prearranged system. Such is the discussion of the probable advance of the Turks into the western Mediterranean, in the latter half of the sixteenth century. Expressions constantly verge on hyperbole. Such is the statement about Francis Drake: "The British trade, the British empire, the British navy, of all these colossal growths the

root is in him." And beyond any other criticism is this; such a book does not carry us any further than we were before. It is after all subjective; it will all look differently to some one else. Each part of it may be successively discredited by some fuller knowledge of the actual occurrences and their connection.

E. P. CHEYNEY.

University of Pennsylvania.

Handbook to the Labor Law of the United States. By F. J. STIMSON.
Pp. 385. Price, \$1.50. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896.

No reader can finish the perusal of Mr. Stimson's work without a feeling of admiration. It not merely fills a real want and is admirably done, but it has the rare merit of being precisely what it pretends to be and what its title would lead the reader to expect. The author has set himself a certain definite task and has not allowed himself to be seduced from it no matter how great the temptation for digressions and discussions. Mr. Stimson has given us a real handbook in which the existing laws concerning labor are stated in a direct straightforward way, and so well expressed and arranged topically that nothing is left to be desired in the way of clearness.

As a handbook, however, the work has its limitations. In many places the effort is not made to give a complete statement of the law in all the states concerning the point under discussion. One frequently encounters such general statements as "A few of the state legislatures have enacted laws concerning," "In some of the states there are laws regulating," etc. This answers every purpose to show the character of labor legislation, but does not obviate the necessity for a further search if it is desired to know the law in every state. Again there is absolutely no critical discussion of the desirability of particular legislation or of the justness of positions assumed by the courts. These points are not cited as defects as it would be ungracious to criticise a work for what it does not pretend to be. They are the necessary restrictions of a work of the character of the present one. One cannot help but wishing, however, that in some future work an author who is so well qualified for the task would give us a full discussion of the principles involved in labor legislation from the social as well as the legal standpoint.

Space does not permit of a consideration of particular features of labor legislation as brought out in the present work. The general impression given by this first attempt to treat of labor laws in their entirety is the unsettled condition of almost every question relating to labor. A code of labor laws is seen to be now in the course of evolution. The effort is being made through both legislative enactment